

residence.

*Ice House* – From the inception of the Railroad Ranch until 1949, there was no electrical refrigeration in the buildings. Blocks of ice were cut on Silver Lake in December and stored in icehouses to satisfy year-round refrigeration needs.

In addition to the buildings in the ranch complex, several other historic elements lend to the character of Harriman State Park of Idaho. These elements include the signature Jack fences and wooden mailboxes found along Highway 20 that have become synonymous with the Railroad Ranch. The use of livestock for grazing and the horse concession also lend to the historic character of the ranch.

## Archaeology

In 1966 an archaeological reconnaissance of the Railroad Ranch was prepared by the Idaho State University Museum. This study identified thirty-seven prehistoric campsites dispersed throughout the ranch property. Several of these sites were believed to be Clovis campsites that date 11,000 to 11,500 years ago.

The prehistoric people that lived at Railroad Ranch were likely hunters, fishers and gatherers living in small communities and moving from one location to another with each passing season. Numerous artifacts including spearheads, arrowheads, broken utensils and other relics have been found along the banks of the Henrys Fork.



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# Recreation Supply & Demand

## Area Market Breakdown

In 2001, the park hosted over 56,000 visitors. Of the visitors who came to participate in day use activities, 48% of them were Idaho residents and 52% were from out of state. Of the overnight guests at the park, 75% were from Idaho and 25% came from other states.

Among out-of-state visitors, western states were the most highly represented with Utah, California, Montana and Washington having the most visitors recognized in attendance at the park.

## Area Population and Growth Projections

The population of the State of Idaho has been growing steadily throughout the decade of the 90's. Between 1990 and 1998, Idaho's growth rate ranked third in the nation. According to the March 2001 report of the U.S. Census Bureau, all but two counties in Idaho (Butte and Shoshone counties) saw a slight to dramatic increase in their populations. Ten counties, including Fremont County, saw an increase from very minimal numbers to up to 9.9%. Thirteen counties grew 10-19.9%. Thirteen counties grew 20-39.9% and six counties grew an astounding 40% or more during that ten-year period.

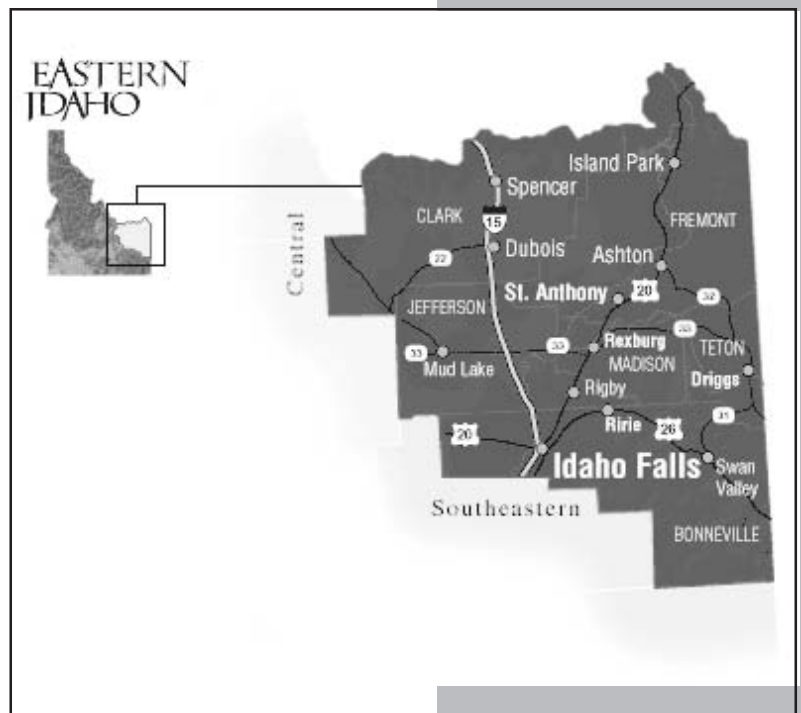
Fremont County's population has been growing steadily over the past 20 years. The actual percentage of growth for the period from 1990 to 2000 was 8.1%. The city of Island

Park grew by 35.2% from a population of 159 in 1999 to a total of 215 in 2000. This population number accounts for the year-round residents. The summer population is actually much larger.

## Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation

National legislation passed in 1965 requires that each state prepare long-range outdoor recreation plans. In Idaho, the document is known as the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP). Idaho's plans have had substantial effects on recreation and tourism policies in the state.

The most recent edition, published in July 1998, identifies existing resources and systems, general outdoor recreation and tourism participation patterns and trends, issues and problems, and recommends strategic solutions to these problems. The SCORTP is not a site specific detailing of facts and data. Local and regional planning, research and cooperation are strongly recommended in order to satisfy the



**Annual In-Community Outdoor Activity Participation  
Region 6**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Walking	57
Sports	32
Exercise	13
Attending festivals, events, culture	16
Biking	9
Other recreation	11
Golf	12
Running	6
Swimming in pools	8
Tennis	2
Picnic, BBQ	5
Skiing, alpine	1
Boating	3
Motorized recreation	1
Fishing	4
Sightseeing	2
Snowmobiling	1
Snow play	2
Swimming in lakes	1
Camping, auto	2
Gardening	2
Hunting	1
Skiing, cross-country	1

Table 5.1

outdoor recreation and tourism needs of Idaho.

Idaho has been divided into seven travel planning regions to assist with the planning, funding, management and administration of recreation and tourism resources. Each travel region is identified with characteristics such as terrain or population that make its resources, needs and potential unique. Harriman State Park of Idaho is in Region 6, consisting of 6 eastern Idaho counties.

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan's (1998) unit of analysis is the region, in terms of activity participation, facility use and other recreation planning variables. Table 5.1 shows generally how people in Region 6 spend their leisure time in their communities. Table 5.2 shows the out-of-community outdoor recreation participation of all Idahoans statewide.

## Area Recreational Opportunities

Harriman State Park of Idaho is located in a region that is known for its outstanding recreational opportunities, most notably fishing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and general sight seeing. Two of this country's most scenic and popular National Parks are within a two-hour drive of Harriman. These parks offer an array of outdoor activities and visitor experiences. In addition to the parks, the surrounding National Forests provide extensive opportunities for

**Annual Out-of-Community  
Outdoor Activity Participation  
Statewide**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Travel home	16
Attending festivals, events, culture	8
Fishing	8
Sightseeing	7
Sports	7
Camping, auto	4
Hunting	4
Skiing, alpine	4
Other recreation	4
Boating	3
Golf	3
Walking	3
Picnic, BBQ	2
Snowmobiling	2
Swimming	2
Biking	1
Camping, backcountry	1
Skiing, cross-country	1
Motorized recreation	1
Snow play	<1

Table 5.2



hiking, biking, camping and picnicking.

The following major destinations are located within a half-day drive of Harriman State Park of Idaho.

### **Major Destinations**

**Yellowstone** – Yellowstone National Park is America's oldest and largest National Park. Established in 1872, the park covers 3,472 square miles of elevated plateau and high peaks. Classified in 1978 as a World Heritage site, the park offers incredible scenery, thousands of thermal pools, geysers and springs and a wide variety of wildlife including bison, bighorn sheep, elk, moose and pronghorn sheep. The park receives over 3 million visitors each year.

**Grand Teton National Park** – Grand Teton National Park, located south of Yellowstone, covers 485 square miles of towering peaks, glaciers and lakes. Ten mountain peaks tower more than a vertical mile above the valley floor. The park offers an array of recreational activities including more than 200 miles of trails, fishing, climbing, boating, whitewater rafting, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, snowmobiling and ice fishing. The park receives over 2.5 million visitors each year.

**Craters of the Moon National Monument** – The lava fields at Craters of the Moon National Monument cover 618 square miles and are the largest basaltic lava fields in the conterminous United



States. This volcanic landscape contains more than 25 cinder cones with large central vents that were thought by early observers to resemble craters of the moon. Recently, the Monument has undergone a significant expansion after receiving several thousand acres of BLM land. The Monument receives more than 150,000 visitors per year.

**Targhee National Forest** – This 1.8 million acre National Forest borders Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. The Targhee National Forest includes canyons, high peaks, desert and numerous lakes and streams. More than 1,100 miles of trail for both summer and winter use can be found. Like Yellowstone, wildlife abounds. The spectacular Upper and Lower Mesa Falls are located within the forest, a short drive from Harriman State Park of Idaho. The Mesa Falls recreation area is jointly managed and interpreted by Harriman State Park of Idaho staff. Camping at Riverside campground and Island Park Reservoir are also available within the forest and are in

close proximity to Harriman State Park of Idaho. Presently the Forest receives over one million visitors each year.

**Beaverhead and Gallatin National Forests, Montana** – The Beaverhead and Gallatin National Forests cover over 3 million acres of southwest Montana. Here glaciated peaks rise from broad valleys to form some of Montana's most majestic ranges.

Both forests are popular outdoor recreation areas providing a wide range of year round activities.

In addition to the major attractions, several other recreational sites can be found in the region. The most significant of these attractions include:

#### **Other Area Recreation Resources**

**Island Park Reservoir** – Island Park Reservoir covers roughly half of the Sheridan Site along the southeast side of the property. The

large reservoir is a popular fishing, boating and water skiing destination. There are five boat launch locations and several campsites around the reservoir.

**Henry's Lake State Park** – This Idaho State Park lies in a high mountain bowl at an elevation of 6,470 feet along the Continental Divide near Yellowstone National Park. The park's shallow lake is known for producing big trout. The lake is surrounded by the towering 8,000 to 10,000-foot Henry's Lake Mountains.

**Henry's Fork** – The Henry's Fork is a tributary of the Snake River and flows south from Big Springs to Rexburg. This blue-ribbon fishery is renowned as one of the best fly-fishing streams in North America. In addition to fishing, Big Springs National Water Trail offers 3 to 5-hour canoe/float trips along a five-mile stretch of the river.

**Teton River Basin** - East of Harriman State Park of Idaho, the Teton River flows through the scenic Teton Valley. Two-thirds of this mountain valley is pasture, open range, and lush irrigated fields bordered by rugged mountains and forested hills.

**Jackson, Wyoming** – The town of Jackson is a world-renowned resort. Jackson is located at the southern entrance to Grand Teton National Park. This community has become a center for cultural activity and recreation including fishing, climbing, boating, whitewater rafting, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and snowmobiling. The



Henry's Lake

National Elk Refuge is located near town.

**Grand Targhee, Big Sky, Pine Basin, Kelly Canyon and Sun Valley Ski Areas** – Numerous small and world-class downhill ski areas are located within a half-day drive of Harriman State Park of Idaho.

**West Yellowstone** – As its name implies, West Yellowstone marks the west entrance to Yellowstone National Park. The town is a major tourist center offering a variety of recreation opportunities.

**Big Springs** – Big Springs is one of the largest springs in the United States. This spring marks the origin of the Henrys Fork. Here, water rises to the surface at a constant 52-degree temperature. The spring is a spawning ground for rainbow trout, although fishing is not permitted. It is also the location of Johnny Sack Cabin, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Mesa Falls Scenic Byway** – This 28-mile scenic road in the Targhee National Forest is located just east of Harriman State Park of Idaho. Upper and Lower Mesa Falls - two of the last undisturbed waterfalls of consequence in the west - are located along the byway. The Henrys Fork drops 114 feet at Upper Mesa Falls, and 65 feet at Lower Mesa Falls. These Forest Service recreation sites include parking areas, accessible restrooms, trails, boardwalks and viewing platforms. In the winter the road become a snowmobile route.

**Teton Scenic Byway** – This 69-mile scenic drive takes the visitor through the lush rolling farmland of eastern Idaho.

**Idaho Falls** – Idaho Falls is the hub of eastern Idaho. This community of 50,000 people is located along the Snake River. The town's most popular attraction is the 14-mile greenbelt that runs along the river. Along this urban trail the falls, which give the city its name, can be seen as well as an endless variety of migrating water fowl.

**St. Anthony Sand Dunes** – The St. Anthony Sand Dunes cover an area 35 miles long and 5 miles wide. These active dunes are composed of fine quartz sand carried by prevailing winds across the Snake River plain. The dunes range in height from 10 to 4 thousand feet.

## How Averell Harriman Built Sun Valley

Starting as an axe man for the railroad at age 17, Averell Harriman made his first trip to Idaho and fell in love with the state. Later, as Chairman of the Board of the Union Pacific, he wanted to develop interest in the West that would both promote traffic for the railroad and the territory as well.

While traveling in Europe, he discovered the popularity of winter ski resorts like St. Moritz in the mountains of Austria. Although there were no ski resorts in the American West, there were lots of people skiing. Harriman felt that a ski resort should be developed in the West. He employed Count Felix Schaffgotsch, an Austrian resort developer to explore locations within the Union Pacific's territory. The search parameters for the resort included a "valley with sun pouring in and a dry climate—not too much snow, but enough for skiing." During his second month of exploration, Count Schaffgotsch called Averell Harriman to report, "I have found it!"

The search for Sun Valley began in January; it was located in February; Averell Harriman convinced the Board of Directors of the Union Pacific to build a million dollar hotel that spring; an architect was hired in May; ground broke by the end of the month; and the hotel was opened by Christmas of 1936.

The hotel, which looks like a wood structure, is really made of concrete. The Union Pacific Board of Directors were very concerned about hotel fires, so a new type of concrete was developed that looks like wood, but was fireproof, for the construction of the hotel. Averell Harriman also had amenities such as a heated outdoor pool for winter, and an outdoor ice-skating rink in the summer added to the hotel.

Sun Valley was the first ski resort to have a ski lift. It was invented by a Union Pacific engineer. He patterned it after the hanging hooks that brought bananas off the boats that he had seen in New Orleans. All these new ideas and inventions came about in the 8 months between the time that Averell Harriman convinced the Board of Directors that a ski resort was a good investment for the Union Pacific and Christmas 1936. And after all that hard work, on opening day the lodge was full of guests, but there wasn't enough snow! So the Union Pacific agreed to let the guest stay for free until it snowed enough to ski. Luckily, heavy snows fell later in the week and there was plenty of snow by New Year's Day 1937.



Averell Harriman, circa 1940



The dunes provide an outstanding venue for ATVs, dune buggies and motorcycle riding in addition to horseback riding. Sledding, tubing and snowmobiling are popular winter activities.

## **Current Park Visitor Profile**

Two surveys were distributed to visitors during the course of the master plan process at Harriman State Park of Idaho. During the summer of 2000, visitors were given the standard state park Day Use Visitors Survey to complete. Seventy copies of that survey were returned. During the winter of 2000-2001, visitors were given the Harriman State Park Visitor Survey to complete. Forty-five copies of that survey were returned. Copies of both surveys are found in the appendix (see Appendix 5). By compiling the results of these two surveys together, it was hoped that a year-round profile of the current park visitor could be determined.

According to the surveys, 48% of

Harriman State Park of Idaho's visitors come from Idaho, 12% come from Utah and 9% come from California. The majority of all visitors are from the western United States. The eastern state with the highest percentage of visitors was New York (4%).

The largest majority of people heard about Harriman State Park of Idaho from a friend or relative (34%), while 21% of the visitors live nearby the park. When asked about their 3 favorite things to do in a park, visitors responded that hiking (15%), wildlife watching (14%) and fishing (13%) topped their list of preferences. Being with family and friends and cross-country skiing (9%) tied for fourth place in the list of favorite things to do.

When asked what additional services visitors would like to see offered in the park, the top answers included bike and boat rentals (tied at 13% each), cabins (12%), nature store (10%), education programs and more trails (tied at 9% each).

Visitor statistics showed 55% of the visitors were females and 45% were males. Nearly one-third of visitors (30%) were in the 45 to 54-year-old age range. The next highest percentage was the 15 to 24-year-old age range (15%), followed by the 35 to 44-year-old group (14%), then the 55 to 64-year-olds and 65+ (tied at 12% each), the 0 to 14-year-olds (11%) and the 25 to 34-year-olds (5%). Nearly half the visitors reported an annual family income of \$35,000-\$75,000.

Most visitors arrived in the park by





or before midday, with 28% arriving between noon – 2 p.m. and 25% arriving between 10 a.m. – noon. Fourteen percent of visitors reported their arrival between 2-4 p.m. and 13% said they came between 8-10 a.m. Ten percent of visitors arrived at the park between 4-6 p.m., 6 % arrived between 6-8 p.m. and the very early (before 8 a.m.) and very late (after 8 p.m.) arrivals both reported 2% each of the visitors. Thirty-six percent of the visitors said their trip to the park was a first time visit.

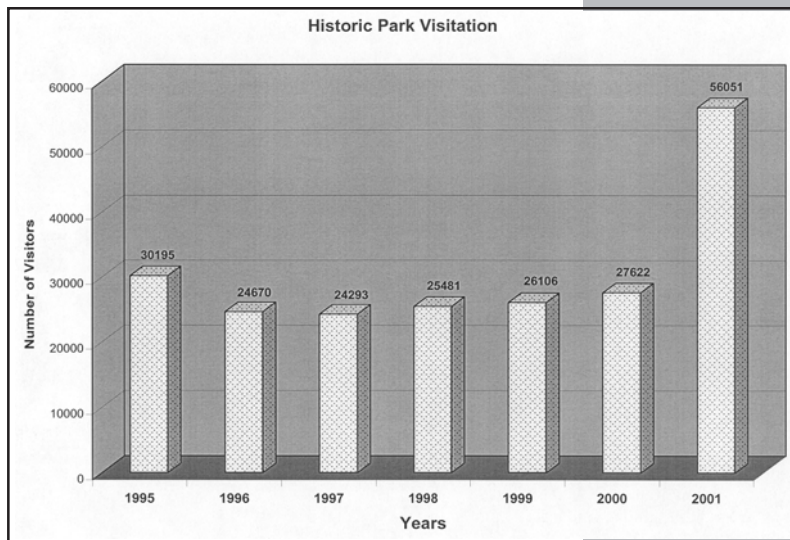
The largest percentage of visitors (14%) said that viewing wildlife was their primary attraction to the park. Fishing, scenery and park facilities all tied as the second place attraction to the park (10%).

Twenty-seven percent of park visitors described their group as a couple, while 26% said they came to the park as a group of friends. Nineteen percent described themselves as two parents with children and 12% said they came as extended family.

When asked to rate our park fees, 72% said they were about right, 13% said they were a little low, 5% said they were a little high, 5% said they were too low and 4% said they were too high.

When asked about customer service received from park staff, 69% of the visitors gave staff an “A” grade, 17% graded them as a “B,” 10% graded them as a “C,” 3% graded them as a “D,” and 2% gave them an “F.”

When asked about their level of satisfaction with the information



they received from the park or agency, 67% of the visitors gave an “A” grade, 20% gave a “B,” 8% gave a “C,” 3% gave a “D,” and 3% gave an “F.”

Looking at the condition of the natural areas of the park, 58% of the visitors gave them an “A” grade, 38% gave them a “B,” 3% gave them a “C,” and 1% gave an “F.”

When asked whether or not they felt safe in the park, 99% of the visitors said “yes, I feel safe” and 1% of the visitors said “I feel fairly safe.”

## Historic Park Visitation Statistics

Visitation at Harriman State Park of Idaho from 1995 through 2001 was as follows.

1995	30,195 visitors
1996	24,670 visitors
1997	24,293 visitors
1998	25,481 visitors
1999	26,106 visitors
2000	27,622 visitors
2001	56,051 visitors

Park records speak of special events



in 1995, such as the National Envirothon, a national competition for high school students in a Natural Resources Conservation Service sponsored program being held at the park that year. However, there is no indication in the park's annual report for 1995 or 1996 that indicates why there would be such a large difference in park attendance from one year to the next, nor is there an indication in the historical data of the weather reports from 1995 and 1996 that would readily explain the 18% differential between the two year's attendance. In 1997, the park's visitor attendance continues to dip by another 2%, however, in the trends section of the Harriman State Park of Idaho annual report, park manager Gene Eyraud reported that "although the park showed a slight decline in attendance there appears to be an increase of trail use and a drop in the historic tours/Jones House Visitor Center use." He also noted "the horse concession has noticed the trend of more customers as returns and a

decrease in the number of drop-ins."

The 1998 report shows a 5% visitor increase and is the beginning of a steady increase in park visitation. The park's annual report for 1998 notes that the Harriman Futures Report "created a major focus change for the park toward developing a quality experience and generating revenue without impacting the natural resource values." It also reported that the Ranch Manager's House came on line as a park rental in May of that year. In 1999, park visitation rose by 2% as elements of the Harriman Futures Report continued to be addressed. Interpretive services were expanded at the park with the addition of the AmeriCorp program and winter programs were offered on Saturdays for children, as were guided ski trips.

Visitation in 2000 increased by 6%. The annual report targets no specific cause for the increase that year. The largest jump in visitation comes in 2001, when the numbers increase by 103%. The major reason for such a large increase is because of a change in the way of counting visitors. Staff switched from a visitor counting formula to an actual count of visitors in 2001. Thus, future years' visitation reports should reflect the higher numbers similar to those of 2001.

### **Projected Park Visitation**

Visitation at Harriman State Park of Idaho is expected to increase in the coming years. In the last 10 years the Island Park community has grown